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Johnston Atoll

JACADS Completes Its Mission

THE Johnston Atoll Chemical Agent Disposal System celebrated the end of its important mission April 11, and will quietly close later this year. But the real news from this isolated facility on Johnston Island, 800 miles southwest of Hawaii, occurred Nov. 29, when JACADS completed destruction of more than 13,000 chemical-agent land mines and became the first U.S. facility to safely eliminate its chemical-weapons stockpile.

The other U.S. installations charged with destroying chemical weapons are in Umatilla, Ore.; Tooele, Utah; Anniston, Ala.; and Pine Bluff, Ark.

"Over the past 10 years JACADS has safely destroyed more than 400,000 rockets, projectiles, bombs, mortar shells and mines," said JACADS

project manager Gary McCloskey.

"JACADS also has destroyed more than 2,000 tons of GB and VX nerve agent and HD blister agent," McCloskey said in a Department of Defense release. "Our 100 per-

cent destruction of Johnston Island's stockpile adds up to six percent of the nation's original total stockpile."

The JACADS campaign to destroy its chemical weapons stockpile was a complex process. The M-23 mines de-

stroyed at JACADS, for example, were filled with approximately 10.5 pounds of VX — in addition to fuses, bursters, activators and charges.

VX, the deadliest of the nerve agents, is fast-acting and persistent. Its density is similar to oil, and it evaporates 2,000 times more slowly than water. VX contaminates objects and kills through skin contact.

Not only did the Army safely destroy the explosives, it also destroyed the VX and decontaminated the metal, while demonstrating that chemical demilitarization can be accomplished safely, effectively and without damage to the environment, McCloskey said.

Another important outgrowth of the JACADS mission, McCloskey said, was that it produced valuable information that will be shared with other nations striving to eliminate their chemical weapons stockpiles. — *Army News Service*

Washington, D.C.

DOD Honors Korean War Veterans

SOUTH Korea and the Department of Defense 50th Anniversary of the Korean War Commemoration Committee in April presented Republic of Korea War Service Medals to Korean War veterans who reside at the U.S. Soldiers' and Airmen's Home. A joint service color guard from the Military District of Washington and musicians from the Army Band also participated in the ceremony, one of many events scheduled during the next three years to express the nation's gratitude to Korean War veterans.

At the height of the war in 1951, the South Korean government offered the Republic of Korea War Service Medal to United Nations military personnel helping to defend the peninsula. At the time, however, U.S. law prohibited American military personnel from wearing medals issued by foreign governments. Congress changed that ruling in 1954, but by then most U.S. service members eligible for the medal had returned home. — *DOD Public Affairs Office*

